



108

Greatest Of All Times

*globally selected
PERSONALITIES*

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Compiled by:
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29 Nov 1931 <::><::><::> 93 Years



We know we cannot
plant seeds with closed
fists. To sow, we must
open our hands.

Adolfo Perez Esquivel

BrainyQuote



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26 Nov 1931



93 Years

Adolfo Pérez Esquivel
Nobel Peace Prize 1980

Born: 26 November 1931, Buenos Aires, Argentina
Residence at the time of the award: Argentina
Role: Artist and Peace Activist

Prize motivation:

"for being a source of inspiration to repressed people,
especially in Latin America"

Prize share: 1/1

<https://www.nobelprize.org/prizes/peace/1980/esquivel/facts/>
<https://www.nobelprize.org/prizes/peace/1980/esquivel/speedread/>

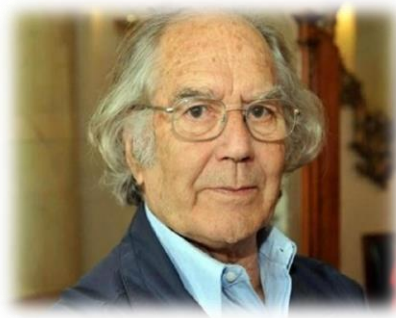




World Summit of Nobel Laureates for Peace

<https://www.nobelpeacesummit.com/project/adolfo-perez-esquivel/>

Adolfo Perez Esquivel



Nobel Peace Laureate 1980

Adolfo Perez Esquivel (born 1931), an Argentinian architect and sculptor. He was awarded the Nobel Prize for his activity for the protection of human rights in Latin America.

In 1974, he was appointed the Secretary-General of the Service, Peace and Justice, a Christian non-violence organisation engaged in defending political prisoners under dictatorship regimes across the continent. The organisation is also involved in promoting the protection of human rights - including social and economic rights - and supporting farm workers and trade unions (for example by provision of legal services).

After the coup d'état in Argentina in 1976 which brought the dictatorship of Jorge Videla to power, the organisation informed the international public about the Dirty War crimes. In 1977, Perez Esquivel was imprisoned in Buenos Aires for more than a year without a trial. He was released in May 1978 but he was still obliged to report to a police station and suffered other repressions. These repressions were gradually lifted, and in 1980, Perez Esquivel was allowed to travel to Europe.

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ROBERT F. KENNEDY HUMAN RIGHTS

<https://rfkhumanrights.org/person/adolfo-perez-esquivel/>

Adolfo Pérez Esquivel

VIEW ADOLFO'S LESSON PLAN: STEWARD OF JUSTICE AND PEACE



Pérez Esquivel was born in Buenos Aires, Argentina, in 1931. Despite family poverty, he attended school and trained as an architect and sculptor—his large-scale murals and other work reflect his faith in humankind and foundational belief in God. He was also a professor of architecture for 25 years. But he worried about human rights abuses in his country, especially the treatment of those who fought for peace and democracy. So, in 1974, he left his career in order to coordinate nonviolent organizations and coalitions in the region as secretary-general of the newly formed Servicio Paz y Justicia (Service for Peace and Justice, or SERPAJ).

In 1976, a military dictatorship took power in Argentina, and their “dirty war” imposed a brutal crackdown on democratic rights, targeting artists, teachers, journalists, activists, and intellectuals. Pérez Esquivel began a campaign to convince the United Nations of the need for a Human Rights Commission. He sent a record of all the breaches of human rights in Latin America that SERPAJ could

uncover. Argentinean authorities jailed Pérez Esquivel without charge in 1977, subjecting him to torture and holding him without trial in Buenos Aires for 14 months. It was his third arrest in as many years, each in a different country. After his release, he faced restrictions and was closely monitored by the police. By 1980, the limits eased, and he was able to continue his important work with SERPAJ—work that to this day includes assisting rural workers in their struggle for land and trade unions in their struggle to protect the rights of their workers.

Adolfo Pérez Esquivel was awarded the 1980 Nobel Peace Prize for his leadership and courageous defence of human rights and democracy for the people of Latin America and for serving as an inspiration to oppressed people all over the world. In his Nobel acceptance speech, he noted his continued belief in “a change based on justice, built with love and which will bring us the most anxiously desired fruit of peace.”



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Adolfo Pérez Esquivel

Toward a Humane World

<https://www.ikedacenter.org/resources/adolfo-perez-esquivel-toward-humane-world>

Adolfo Pérez Esquivel offered these remarks at the Centre's Second Annual Global Citizen Awards Ceremony, held in 1996. His co-recipient that year was futurist Hazel Henderson. Esquivel is the founder of Servicio de Paz y Justicia (“Service, Peace and Justice Foundation”,

or SERPAJ). Despite great personal risk, Esquivel has worked ceaselessly to defend human rights throughout Latin America, including in Argentina, where he was imprisoned in 1977.

Adolfo Perez Esquivel Remarks

We are now facing changes of such an enormous magnitude that, in a sense, all of society finds itself shaken up and confused. Often, we find ourselves unable to react in the face of the enormous speed with which these changes are taking place. We face today an increasing globalization that affects all aspects of our lives. We have to deepen our understanding of what it means and of what its consequences are.

Almost all of us are inhabitants of cities, and therefore the question of the growing urbanization of our societies should be a matter of concern to all of us. Over the past years, I have been struck by a growing phenomenon — people who seem to be losing their own identity and facing tremendous solitude even in the midst of the thousands or the millions of people who are around them. We also see in our cities that people suffer from an increasing level of violence and a growing degree of marginalization. This level of violence constitutes a serious violation of human rights and a very real risk to the survival of our democracies. These cries must be confronted now while there is still time to resolve them.

Population growth is concentrated in the peripheral or marginalized sectors of our cities and our countries. This impoverishment and marginalization is worsening as a result of prevailing economic policies which, as they are applied around the world, are stimulating a return to feudal structures. In many parts of Latin America — and in other continents as well — there is a growing concentration of wealth in a few hands, while an increasing number of people are excluded from society. The rich move into exclusive neighborhoods — often strongly guarded “ghettoes” of their own.

With the globalization of markets, we are experiencing an end to the concept of the welfare state. Governments are no longer committed to ensuring the welfare of their citizens. This is expressed in the cuts to all kinds of social services. Market-oriented policies are leading to a tremendous rise in unemployment throughout the world. Unemployment is one of the most serious problems that our societies must face in the

coming years. This problem should indicate to us that the prevailing economic model is in crisis, not only in underdeveloped countries, but in developed countries such as the United States as well.

The emphasis on globalized markets is really a very heavy burden for our societies to carry into the future. In the name of deregulation, our governments have withdrawn from anything having to do with the quality of life of our citizenry. This wave of deregulation, which says that we should let the market set the rules, ignores the fact that it is this very same market which has been unable to really foster the development of our societies. It is this same market which has generated a rise in poverty.

"We have to be very creative in the process of building and creating freedom and liberty for everyone. We have to be very creative so that people's needs can be fulfilled."

<<< Adolfo Pérez Esquivel

My hope here is to highlight some of the trends and developments that will have an enormous impact on our future. By the year 2000, nineteen of the twenty-five largest urban concentrations will be in the poorest areas of the world, and they will contain the poorest, the most excluded, the most marginalized members of society. In these cities we will find the largest proportion of highly contaminating industries; we will see that the waste dumps and waste disposal areas are simply in open air. One of the most severe problems we will face is the lack of potable water. The other thing we will lack is breathable air. Today, more than 600 million people, more than half of the people who live in the Southern Hemisphere, live in slums. In the city of Calcutta alone, there are more than 3,000 slum areas with no adequate sewage, no access to hygiene, no water. If we look at the multitudes who are now concentrating themselves in these urban areas, fleeing from the rural areas or fleeing from wars, we see that there is among them a growing number of illegal immigrants, people in search of better opportunities. To this more

traditional movement from the rural areas to the cities, we must also add a new phenomenon — the impoverished middle classes are increasingly leaving the center and going to the peripheries of the cities.

Here I think we have to ask ourselves if the future of humanity really has a horizon of hope. We have to be very creative in the process of building and creating freedom and liberty for everyone. We have to be very creative so that people's needs can be fulfilled. This will be possible only to the extent that we are able to generate and strengthen grassroots participation in people's organizations. All of us have an ideal. If we don't, we must invent one.

What is really being globalized today is poverty. We hope that in the year 2000 there can be a sort of jubilee where the foreign debt can be removed from the shoulders of our people. The foreign debt, or external debt, is unjust and immoral. I call it the "eternal debt." What we also have to find is a balance in our urban areas, a growth on a human scale that will impede the globalization of poverty and the loss of identity on the part of our peoples.

So far, I have portrayed a very grave future. But we also have to focus on the signs of hope that exist. As peoples, we cannot be mere spectators. We have to become the protagonists of our history. As peoples, we have to learn to unite in the building of a culture of solidarity and of hope.

The other point I want to mention is the question of feeding the hungry. The world has the technical capacity to resolve the problem of hunger. What is lacking is political will.

I want to close by mentioning that in the year 1981, 54 Nobel Prize Laureates came together and issued a proclamation against hunger. In it we said that it is necessary for people everywhere to rebel against the kind of pragmatism where people resign themselves to the problems, they see around them. If we resign ourselves to the difficulties around us, then we will have lost. If we resist, however, we will be able to change the situation and solve the problems. In order to achieve freedom, we need to have a larger dosage of rebelliousness. If we don't have the spirit of rebelliousness, we'll never be able to achieve peace because peace is not something which can be given. Peace is something that must be won, and it will be won only through struggle.

A few days ago in Bueno Aires, I saw some theater, a piece by Beckett, "Waiting for Godot." In it, two beggars wait and wait for Godot, and Godot never arrives. Something very similar to that is happening to us. Many of us are like the two beggars. We're waiting for something: we're waiting for something in life. We're waiting perhaps to achieve something. Perhaps we're waiting for death or for love. This wait can lead to failure. It can lead to tremendous disillusionment. But if we have hope, hope makes change possible. It makes it possible to think about and to achieve a new world, a more just world, and a more humane world. What will happen depends on what each of us will do. Each of us must decide.

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Award Ceremony Speech

<https://www.nobelprize.org/prizes/peace/1980/ceremony-speech/>

Presentation Speech by Professor John Sanness,
Chairman of the Norwegian Nobel Committee

Translation

Your Majesty, Your Royal Highnesses, Your Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

The Norwegian Nobel Committee has awarded the Peace Prize for 1980 to Adolfo Pérez Esquivel.

He has devoted many years of his life to the cause of human rights in Argentina and the whole of Latin America. He is an untiring and consistent champion of the principle of nonviolence in the struggle for social and political liberty. He has lit a light in the dark, a light which, in the opinion of our Committee, should never be allowed to be extinguished.

Adolfo Pérez Esquivel is, furthermore, a champion of nonviolence in relations between nations. He has, for instance, warned of the danger of an escalation of the territorial conflict between Argentina and Chile.

The year 1980 has proved no more encouraging than 1979 in the struggle to promote human rights and peace.

In Asia last year one of the largest countries in the area, Iran, rose to overthrow a tyranny and a dictatorship, renouncing the protection of a major power that had cooperated with the old regime, and initiating a rapid reduction of its armed forces.

It has subsequently been attacked by a neighbouring country, and the ensuing war is still being waged. Moreover, for a whole year the Iranians have been perplexed spectators to a campaign launched by a superpower in an adjoining country. This war, too, is still being fought.

The war in Afghanistan, more than anything else, has cast its dark shadow on men and women in the part of the world to which we Norwegians belong. The fear of loss of liberty and human rights contends in many minds with the fear of war.

This autumn Europe witnessed the breakthrough of a movement for freedom in Poland. This movement has been marked by moderation and a realistic approach. It has set itself limited goals; it has clung to the policy of nonviolence; its unshaken spiritual foundation is respect for human rights. We await the outcome, in anxiety and hope, knowing that it will have a profound and lasting effect on our entire continent, as well as far beyond its borders.

The two courageous women from Northern Ireland who received the Nobel Peace Prize for 1976, [Mairead Corrigan and Betty Williams](#), have made it known publicly that they had nominated Adolfo Pérez Esquivel for the Peace Prize.

They themselves had been awarded the Peace Prize because, prompted by their own bitter experience, they were prepared to work actively for peace, brotherhood, and mutual respect in the relations between Protestant and Roman Catholic sections of the population in a Northern Ireland racked with terror, hate-ridden and stricken with fear.

The grievous, purely personal stresses and strains these two brave women, of their own choice, were prepared to undergo, and the tense situation that still prevails in their land, illustrate how arduous the struggle for peace, brotherhood and human dignity may prove.

From his closely confined exile in Gorky the laureate for 1975, [Andrei Sakharov](#), has conveyed his greetings to Esquivel, through the medium of his wife, while at the same time the ranks of human rights

protagonists around him have been decimated by arrest and banishment.

In his message Sakharov expresses his understanding for "the gravity and the tragedy of the problems facing your country and other countries in Latin America. Your vigorous struggle for justice and the help you have given to people suffering under oppression are cherished by people who live thousands of miles away, in another world".

Last year, Nobel's Peace Prize was awarded to [Mother Teresa](#). She had worked among the most destitute, the lonely, the outcast, the dying in Calcutta and in other parts of the world.

The Committee made it clear that the reason for awarding her the prize was not the great scope that her activities had achieved, but the spirit that inspired and informed it. Those who came or were brought to her and her sisters were to enjoy "the feeling of being received and recognised as people with their own human dignity and the right to respect".

To quote words used on the occasion of the presentation of the Peace Prize to Mother Teresa in this University Festival Hall:

"Can any political, social, or intellectual feat of engineering, on the international or on the national plane, however effective and rational, however idealistic and principled its protagonists may be, give us anything but a house built on a foundation of sand, unless the spirit of Mother Teresa inspires the builders and takes its dwelling in their building?"

In the opinion of our Committee it is this spirit, too, that inspires her co-religionist Esquivel, in his choice of a different and wider field of activity than Mother Teresa's. He has heard and answered a social and political call to change the social and political world around him, so that respect for Man's right and dignity can be aroused in the hearts of all, to the benefit of all mankind.

May I quote once again from last year's presentation ceremony:

"Mother Teresa works in the world as she finds it, in the slums of Calcutta and other towns and cities. But she makes no distinction between poor and rich persons, between poor and rich countries. Politics have never been her concern, but economic, social, and political

work with these same aims is in complete harmony with her own life's work".

In this respect the award this year has its parallel in last year's.

Adolfo Pérez Esquivel was born in Buenos Aires in 1931. He is a well-known architect, and also a sculptor. His sculptures are to be seen in various public places in Argentina. In 1968 he was appointed Professor of Architecture and Sculpture at the National Academy of Art in Buenos Aires.

In 1971 his life took a new turn: the Roman Catholic Church in Latin America was subject to a spirit of ferment, which influenced him, too. Various circles within the Church raised fresh questions, with regard to the duties of the Church and of Christians to the community in which they live. They espoused the cause not only of respect for human dignity in the classical sense of the word, but also of economic and social reforms. They sought contact with workers and peasants, and supported the landless peasants' demands for land and the workers' right to organisation and solidarity.

Esquivel's intense commitment to the cause of human rights and nonviolent methods, however, was fuelled by the special situation that was developing in his own country of Argentina. There was a risk that a wave of terror and counterterror might erupt. Esquivel joined a group who rejected terror as a weapon, seeking inspiration instead from Mohandas Gandhi and advocating a campaign of nonviolence as a means of achieving liberation.

At a conference in Montevideo in 1968 a joint organisation was set up embracing active nonviolent groups throughout Latin America. In 1974 it was decided to continue along more permanent lines, and Esquivel was entrusted with the post of Secretary-General, resigning from his professorship in order to devote himself wholly to his new vocation.

The name of the organisation - Paz y Justicia (Peace and Justice) - clearly indicates the organisation's fundamental views and programme. Its publication, bearing the same name, proved a link between groups of likeminded persons throughout Latin America. Their activities were, and still are, coordinated in the organisation's modest offices in Buenos Aires.

As its Secretary-General Esquivel visited a number of other countries for the purpose of conferences and talks. On two occasions he was arrested and expelled - in Brazil in 1975 and in Ecuador in 1976. In 1976 the organisation moved to persuade the United Nations to establish a human rights commission. Documents were drawn up providing evidence of violations of human rights in Latin America. In order to solicit support for this Esquivel visited a number of European countries.

On his return he was arrested in Buenos Aires. No charge was preferred against him; he was not even interrogated. He has given us little indication of the way he was personally treated in prison. After fourteen months he was released, but under the obligation to report to the police, as well as being subject to other restrictions. These restrictions were somewhat relaxed in 1979. Meanwhile, he has resumed his work with Paz y Justicia. This year he was in a position to undertake a number of fresh journeys, which included Europe. This autumn he visited the neighbouring country of Chile, in order to conduct a series of talks with a number of institutions, organisations, and groups, among them the so-called "Group of 24", which comprises lawyers of various political persuasions.

Early in the 1970s Argentina experienced conditions not far removed from civil war, with extreme terrorist organisations, highly organised and amply supplied with weapons, creating an atmosphere of uncertainty and fear with murder, bomb attacks, abductions, and blackmail. A state of bloody urban warfare, much of it conducted at night, developed, with terrorists from the Right and terrorists from the Left ranged against one another.

Successive governments failed to solve the crisis and to stem the tide. The number of victims rose alarmingly right up to the year 1976.

The military regime that was then established has, however, itself resorted to extreme violence. Thousands of people have disappeared without a trace, and we know that in many cases they have been tortured and killed. This has been carried out under a veil of profound silence, without any public announcements, without any trial or verdict. The victims have been people far removed from terrorism in all its many forms.

In order to prevent the creation of a climate of public opinion, and to ensure an atmosphere of indifference and apparent assent to these

methods, appeals have been made to people's fear of Argentina once again reverting to the conditions obtaining in the early 1970s. There is no doubt that this fear is still very much alive today; but in order to ensure that the wall of silence is not breached, talking and writing about those who have disappeared - *los desaparecidos* - has at the same time become a perilous undertaking. Among those who have disappeared are journalists who not only knew too much but who were anxious to publish what they knew.

Throughout these troubled times Adolfo Pérez Esquivel has stuck unflinchingly to his principles. He was himself a supporter of far-reaching social and political reforms. To this extent he was in a position to appreciate some of the motives that prompted terrorism inspired by the Left. But when, with Mohandas Gandhi as his great example, he embarked on a hunger strike in 1970-71, he did so as a protest against terrorism, both from the Right and from the Left, and among other things against the abduction - and subsequent blackmail - of one of the directors for a Fiat factory in Argentina.

For this reason, he occupies today a position of great moral strength in his campaign against the methods that are being used. He can reply calmly to those who regard his protests against such police methods as a defense and protection for terrorists. To quote his own words:

"We have denounced repression... of all kinds. We have denounced the killing of generals, colonels and innocent relatives of military officials. We have no connections with political parties of any sort, much less armed groups. We act by means of evangelical nonviolence, which we see as a force for liberation".

The aims symbolised by the very name of the organisation, Paz y Justicia, go well beyond a protest against terror and violence. In his own words: "You cannot talk solely of human rights in terms of torture, imprisonment and killing. True, this is the gravest aspect. But we must also look at the case of the peasant who has no land and is dying of hunger". For Esquivel, as for Gandhi, nonviolence involves much more than a mere passive acceptance of the world as it is. It is a strategy in a struggle to change the world, using means that will not stifle the good intentions and the results one aims to achieve.

This is what the movement and its Secretary-General represent throughout Latin America. It is divided into three regions, each with its own office, coordinated from the head office in Buenos Aires. It is

ecumenical, and no one is excluded on religious grounds. Nevertheless, it is rooted in the fermentation and new ideas that have been stirring in the dominant Roman Catholic Church in Latin America during the last fifteen years, the visible results of which have included the two meetings of bishops in Medellin in Colombia in 1968 and in Puebla in Mexico in 1978.

These new trends, however, which have also encountered a certain amount of resistance, aim to forge new links between the Church and the broad masses of the people. This means that clergy and laymen must undertake fresh obligations within the community. The Church must not be content merely to carry out its ritual functions - baptism, mass, funerals - which are part of its accepted routine. Nor must it merely be content to provide social relief to those in need, in a spirit of compassion and self-sacrifice - though this, too, has always been accepted as one of its tasks. Nor must it be content merely to exercise Man's duty to his neighbour on the purely personal level, and in his immediate circle.

A new keyword in this Roman Catholic philosophy has been "evangelisation", and this word has acquired an extended meaning. Numerous working and discussion groups have grown up, in which men and women debate and assume obligations to their community. The aim, too, is to include the poor and underprivileged. Attempts have been made to organise them in a struggle to achieve their rights, by the creation of fresh organisations or by support for the old ones. The Church is under strong pressure to define its own attitude to political, economic, and social problems.

A great many different trends are involved: the organisation possesses no ready-made models or systems engineered to produce the perfect community. Nor are there any recipes for economic strategy capable of ensuring a state of welfare that could be enjoyed by all. This lies outside the task of the Church in this world. But as a minimum society is expected not to reconcile itself to conditions that make it impossible for men and women to gain respect for their human dignity or to accord this respect to others. The leaders of society, too, are expected to show in their politics respect for human dignity, in all men and women, without any exception. The organisation repudiates any policy inspired by greed, selfishness, and lust for power, and which ignores the great mass of the people.

This is where people like Esquivel take their place in the social struggle; for him, the strategy of nonviolence is the only right approach. Poverty spawns terrorism, and terrorism increases poverty, he once said. It is clear to him that violence as a means to an end destroys the very aim one originally dreamt of achieving. Latin America is a subcontinent, embracing a great many countries with an extreme range of different conditions. Many of them are much poorer than Argentina; many of them have inherited far deeper historical sources of friction between sections of the population with different origins; and many of them are much smaller and more helpless than Argentina. Nevertheless, the Committee is of the opinion that Adolfo Pérez Esquivel has a message that is valid for the whole of Latin America - and not only for that part of the world.

A great many organisations in Latin America are working on the basis of the same fundamental principles. Paz y Justicia may not necessarily have the largest membership. These fundamental principles are supported by many excellent spokesmen in numerous countries, men who may be better known than Esquivel. The reason his voice reached all the way from Latin America to the Norwegian Nobel Committee was not because of its strength but because of its purity and clarity. It is our hope that his work will bear fruit in his own country, that it will hearken to his voice and break out from the vicious circle of terror and counter-terror, of anarchy and reaction, setting an example to the whole of Latin America.

Commenting on the Committee's choice, an English-speaking newspaper in Buenos Aires had the following comment to make:

"The balance of power between those who are prepared to defend any means to achieve a particular goal and those who insist that a crime is a crime, no matter who commits it or for what reason, has now been changed in Argentina".

It is also gratifying to note that one of the major Argentinian newspapers, which wrongly suspects the Norwegian Nobel Committee of ignoring violations of human rights in other countries with different systems and ideologies from those obtaining in present-day Argentina, concludes by stating that if this suspicion were to prove incorrect, then the award of the prize should be welcomed.

This inspires us with hope.

The Norwegian Nobel Committee has frequently been accused, both at home and abroad, of looking at the world through Norwegian spectacles, from the standpoint of Norwegian attitudes and Norwegian interests.

But we gladly accept this description of our Committee, which appeared in the great Chilean weekly *Hoy*, written by the former Minister of Justice, Professor Sinhuega, after Esquivel's visit, in an article entitled *Who is He?*:

"It [the Norwegian Nobel Committee] is familiar with Pérez's work and ideas. It has been informed of torture and of persons who disappeared. There [in Norway] human life means a great deal, whatever human life is involved".

Maybe the Committee's choice reflects the Norwegian cultural background. This is possibly inevitable. But in this case, as in others, this background has surely served to build a bridge between us and champions of human dignity in other parts of the world, people such as Adolfo Pérez Esquivel and his fellow workers.

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Adolfo Pérez Esquivel Acceptance Speech

<https://www.nobelprize.org/prizes/peace/1980/esquivel/acceptance-speech/>

Adolfo Pérez Esquivel held his Acceptance Speech on
10 December 1980, in the Oslo City Hall, Norway.

Your Majesty, Mr. President of the [Nobel Committee](#), Committee Members, Ladies and Gentlemen:

With humility I stand before you to receive the high distinction that the Nobel Committee and the Parliament grant to those who have committed their lives on behalf of peace and to the pursuit of justice and solidarity among nations.

I would like to receive this award in the name of the people of Latin America and especially in the name of the poorest and smallest of my brothers and sisters, who are the most beloved children of God. I receive it in the name of my indigenous brothers and sisters, the peasants, workers, and young people, in the name of the thousands of members of religious orders and of men and women of goodwill, who renounce privileges to share the life and way of the poor, and who struggle to build a new society.

For a man like myself, *a small voice for those who have no voice*, who struggles so that the *cry of the people* may be heard in all its power, for one without any special identity except as a *veritable Latin American man* and as a Christian, – this is, without any doubt, the highest honour that I can receive: to be considered *a servant of peace*.

I come from a continent that lives between anguish and hope, where my own history is being written. I am convinced that the gospel power of nonviolence presents a choice that opens up for us a challenge of new and radical perspectives. It is an option which gives priority to the essential Christian value: *the dignity of the human being*; the sacred, transcendent and irrevocable dignity that belongs to the human being by reason of being a child of God and a brother or sister in Christ, and therefore, our own brother and sister.

In these long years of struggle for our organisation, the Service for Peace and Justice in Latin America, we have shared the path together with the poorest and most necessitous.

We have not much to say but much to share in order to achieve by nonviolent struggle the abolition of injustice and the attainment of a more just and humane society for all.

It is walking together with our brothers and sisters, those who are persecuted, who hunger and thirst for justice, who suffer oppression, who live in anguish by the prospect of war, who suffer aggressive violence or see regularly postponed the attainment of their elemental rights.

It is for all these that I am here today.

Would that my voice could have the strength of voice of the humble, a voice that denounces injustice and proclaims hope in God and humanity.

This is the hope of all human beings who long to live in harmony in common with all persons as brothers and sisters and as children of God.

Latin America is a continent young and vital, which was described by Pope Paul VI as the "Continent of Hope".

To understand this is to value this reality and be called to share in its destiny. It means to achieve a profound identity with the people who are the protagonists in this historic process. It means being ready to redeem pain and suffering with love in the way that Jesus taught.

When we see the world our people inhabit, we see it as an affront to God in which millions of our children, youths, adults, and the elderly live under the mark of under-development.

The institutionalised violence, misery and oppression generate a dual reality, fruit of the political and economic systems that create injustice, sanctifying a social order that benefits only a few: the rich becomes ever richer at the expense of the poor who becomes ever poorer.

Confronting that reality – like the Catholic bishops at Puebla, like the Christians committed to the struggle for human rights, like all persons of goodwill – I want to share the anguish on the suffering face of the Latin American man or woman in whom we see the suffering face of Christ, our Lord, questioning us.

As I speak to you, I see before my eyes the vivid images of my brothers and sisters:

- faces of the workers and peasants living at sub-human levels, whose rights to organise are severely limited;
- faces of children who suffer from malnutrition;
- of young people who see their hopes frustrated;
- of the marginal urban poor;
- of our indigenous people;
- of the mothers searching for their missing sons and daughters;
- of the disappeared, many of them mere children;
- of thousands of exiles;
- of the people who clamour for liberty and justice of all.

In spite of so much suffering and pain, I live in hope because I feel that Latin America is a continent on the rise. Its liberation may be delayed but never denied.

We live in hope because, like St. Paul, we believe that love never dies. Human beings in the historical process have created enclaves of love with their active practice of solidarity throughout the world, with the goal of the full liberation of humanity.

For me it is essential to have the inner peace and serenity of prayer in order to listen to the silence of God, which speaks to us in our personal life and the history of our times, of the power of love.

Because of this faith in Christ and humankind, we must apply our humble efforts to build a more just and humane world. I want to affirm emphatically: such a world is possible.

To create this new society, we must reach out our hands, fraternally, without hatred and rancour, for reconciliation and peace, with unfaltering determination in the defence of truth and justice.

We know we cannot plant seeds with closed fists. To sow we must open our hands.

I want to thank all of you and the Nobel Committee for this high distinction given the humble people of Latin America. I am deeply moved and even more committed to redouble my efforts in the struggle for peace and justice.

We know that peace is only possible when it is the fruit of justice. True peace is a profound transformation by means of the force of nonviolence that is the power of love.

I would like to tell you that, thanks to the support and understanding of my wife and children even in the hardest and most difficult moments of this struggle, I could continue this work together with my brothers and sisters of Latin America. With my family's love, silence and solidarity they have always helped to give me strength and courage to serve my brothers and sisters.

Invoking the strength of Christ, our Lord, I would like to share with you, with my people, and with the world what He has taught us in the Sermon on the Mount:

Blessed are the poor in spirit;
- theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

Blessed are the gentle;
- they shall inherit the earth.
Blessed are they who mourn;
- they shall be comforted.
Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness;
- they shall be satisfied.
Blessed are the merciful;
- they shall obtain mercy.
Blessed are the pure in heart;
- they shall see God.
Blessed are the peacemakers;
- they shall be called children of God.
Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake;
- theirs is the kingdom of heaven.
Blessed are you when people abuse you and persecute you and speak all kinds of falsehoods against you for my sake.
Rejoice and be glad, for great will be your reward in heaven. In the same way they persecuted the prophets before you.
(Matthew 5, 1-12)

Receive my deep gratitude and my wish for peace and well-being.

(☺)@@@@@@@@@@@@@☺)

Adolfo Pérez Esquivel

“THE WORK WE DO IS SOLIDARITY WORK”

<https://sur.conectas.org/en/adolfo-perez-esquivel-the-work-we-do-is-solidarity-work/>

INTERVIEW WITH ADOLFO PÉREZ ESQUIVEL



An important reference for many generations on the defence of human rights and the promotion of a full and dignified life, Adolfo Pérez Esquivel is undoubtedly an enlightened being with a rich spiritual life. His hope enables him to boldly foresee what has yet to happen, like someone who anticipates what the next steps on the path to an uncertain future will be. It is part of the prophetic work that Adolfo P. Esquivel has been doing for decades as the president of SERPAJ (Servicio Paz y Justicia) in Argentina.

In his small office in Servicio Paz y Justicia's building in the legendary San Telmo neighbourhood in Buenos Aires, Adolfo greets us with a big smile, light steps, a firm handshake and hug, like someone who pretends that his 90 years of age are just another fact that gets lost in the vivid testimonies that smell a bit like nostalgia from Buenos Aires and a bit like dreams that are yet to be born.

Leonardo Félix • Who is Adolfo Pérez Esquivel in 2019?
Adolfo Pérez Esquivel • A human being who continues to fight for his fellow humans. That's all, which is a lot.

LF • You have a long history of fighting for human rights on the continent, for which you have been given several awards and recognition, including a Nobel Peace Prize (1980), during a very turbulent time in our recent past.

APE • First of all, one should not seek to win awards, of any kind. The work we do, we do out of solidarity. I do it out of faith and social, cultural and non-partisan political commitment. I try to share two things: the bread that nourishes the body and the bread that nourishes the spirit. And freedom. I will not resign myself to slavery.

LF • This is related to something we want to ask you: how do your faith and your religious ties contribute to your commitment to defending democracy?

APE • I have always believed that the gospel is not just another thing to read. It is a condition of life that one assumes and tries to put into practice. The link between my faith and democracy is fundamental. It is what sustains me.

02

LF • Where does your faith come from, Adolfo?

APE • I was born in the legendary San Telmo neighbourhood, very close to another famous neighbourhood in Buenos Aires, La Boca. I am from a tenement house. My father was an immigrant fisherman and my mother was the daughter of a Guarani indigenous women from the province of Corrientes¹. This region was full of immigrants and former slaves. Our playmates were other immigrants and descendants of slaves.

I grew up with the Franciscans at the Colegio San Francisco. When my mother died, I ended up in an orphanage for boys, where I stayed with the Carmelite nuns in the Patronato Español until the age of 10. I always tried to see and discover what God was and is in my life.

LF • Is your desire to know God's place in your life related to "non-violence", which is a cause that you continue to fight for?

APE • When I was a boy, I would sell newspapers on the streets of my neighbourhood to earn a living. I would take the trolley car to Plaza de Mayo and there was a man there who sold used books. One day, he said to me, "here kid. I have two books for you: one is a gift and you can pay me for the other one when you can". The book that was a gift was Mahatma Gandhi's autobiography, *The Story of My Experiments with Truth*, and the one that I had to pay him for was *The Seven Storey Mountain* by Thomas Merton, Gandhi's friend. Later, I fell in love with the gospels, the Sermon on the Mount, which is where non-violence is clearly affirmed. Phrases such as "love thy neighbour as thyself" had an impression on me. And, obviously, what I read on Gandhi deeply moved me. The idea that what is common to all religions is love and respect for human beings continues to be valid in my life, just as non-violence as a means to make demands and defend life is.

I have also gone through some very powerful experiences. I was arrested on April 4th, 1977, the first day of the Holy Week that year. I don't believe in coincidences: Martin Luther King (the Baptist preacher in the United States) was assassinated on the same date in 1968. So, I was arrested on a very special day.

In the midst of the strong, nauseating smell of my tiny prison cell, where I had to yell for a really long time to get them to let me out to go to the bathroom, I found "God does not kill" written on the wall. These words, written by a prisoner that I only knew spiritually, were etched in my mind forever.

I was held there for 32 days and they took me on one of the "death flights"³. I was chained to a seat at the back of the airplane. Being a good navigator, I recognised the route we were taking, which went from the Luján River, over Martín García Island and I could make out Montevideo (Uruguay) in the distance. In the end, they were unable to throw me out of the airplane thanks to the enormous international solidarity and the campaign people were organising in Europe and other places for my release.

LF • Tell us a little about Servicio Paz y Justicia en América Latina (SERPAJ). What is it? How was the organisation born and what is its importance and impact in the region?

APE • SERPAJ was born ecumenically. People from the Methodist Church in Argentina, such as Methodist bishops Federico Pagura, Carlos Gattinoni and Aldo Etchegoyen, together with Brazilian Catholics Dom Hélder Câmara and Antonio Fragozo and the bishop of Riobamba, Leonidas Proaño (the bishop of the Indians), made it possible. With their support, I assumed the responsibility of leading this movement, which Federico Pagura in Mendoza had been forming for years. In the early 1970s, we began to help refugees arriving from Chile and we created the CAREF.⁴ In 1974, they put me in charge of coordinating this experience at the continental level.

I believe that SERPAJ's work is to build networking. Knowing that the problem experienced in one place is everyone's problem is our strength. When vulnerable groups are isolated, it puts their lives in danger. Therefore, despite the peculiarities of each SERPAJ on the continent, the active defence of human rights based on non-violence is our distinguishing trait.

03

LF • What was the most important or significant role of the Theology of Liberation in Latin America?

APE • The Theology of Liberation had a major impact on the continent. After the Second Vatican Council (1962-1965) and the Second General Conference of the Latin American Episcopate in Medellín (1968), many Catholic communities returned to the towns or slums and rediscovered the space for liberation through God together with the poor, their struggles and dreams. As Peruvian Catholic theologian Gustavo Gutiérrez says, the Liberation Theology is about "*drinking again from the sources of living water*".

LF • In your opinion, what should be the role of religion in the public sphere and what is the biggest challenge that religions face today in a global context marked by conservatism and fundamentalism?

APE • First, a brief analysis. To stop the Theology of Liberation from advancing, Reagan created the Institute of Religion and Democracy during his government, from which many of these fundamentalist movements emerged with their alienating, individualist, non-community-oriented religions. This differs from public testimony of Jesus, who created community based on his apostles. And I'd add the proviso that in the middle of so many male apostles, they forgot one fundamental women apostle, Maria Magdalena, and the other women to whom Jesus appeared after resurrection.

LF • Do you believe that there is a link between the public role of religion and feminist groups in Latin America that needs to be rediscovered?

APE • Currently, the women's movement is a non-violent struggle that changes society radically, like mighty rivers that overflow and transform reality. It is one of the great hopes for transforming our social and political reality.

LF • Based on your experience, what advice would you give to human rights defenders today?

APE • One very simple thing: do not stop smiling at life. The day they stop smiling is the day they have been defeated. Social resistance is also cultural in the sense that we know we are not here in vain, only to survive. We are here to learn to live. Mother Teresa of Calcutta led me to realize that love is the great revolution and the women's movements have a lot of it. I celebrate this and it fills me with hope about what is to come.



Interview conducted in June 2019 by
Leonardo Daniel Félix
Translated by Karen Lang



<https://peacejam.org.uk/about-us/our-nobel-peace-laureates/adolfo-perez-esquivel>

Adolfo Pérez Esquivel

1980 Nobel Peace Prize-winner for his work promoting true democracy in Latin America.



Adolfo Pérez Esquivel was born in 1931 in Buenos Aires, Argentina. Despite his family's poverty, he went to school and became a well-known artist. His large-scale murals and artworks can be viewed in parks across Latin America and Europe. His faith in humankind and belief in God are reflected in his paintings, drawings,

and sculptures. He also worked as a professor of architecture.

In 1976, a military dictatorship took power over Argentina and carried out a policy of repression, torture, and murder called the

'Dirty War.' They imposed a brutal crackdown on democratic rights that targeted artists, teachers, journalists, activists, and intellectuals. The government censored or physically 'disappeared' these people. Some 30,000 people were murdered by the military regime.

Adolfo worried about human rights abuses in his country, especially the treatment of local leaders who worked for peace and democracy. In 1974, he quit teaching and became secretary general of the newly formed Peace and Justice Service (Servicio Paz y Justicia - SERPAJ) — a group that coordinated nonviolent movements in the region.

In 1977, the military dictatorship imprisoned and tortured him for 14 months. He was released after being named Amnesty International's Political Prisoner of the Year in 1978, which led to thousands of letters being written to the Argentinean government demanding his release.

Adolfo Pérez Esquivel was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 1980 for his courageous defence of human rights. In 1983, the military government was thrown out and members of the dictatorship were brought to trial. Today, he continues his work with SERPAJ, including a campaign calling for a cancellation of the debt of countries in the Global South. He has also created 'Peace Villages' that provide training and housing for homeless and orphaned children in Argentina.

He has been a member of PeaceJam since 1996.

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Nobel Laureate Adolfo Perez Esquivel

Discusses Human Rights in Buenos Aires

<https://agbu.org/press-release/nobel-laureate-adolfo-perez-esquivel-discusses-human-rights-buenos-aires>



AGBU "Liga de Jovenes" President Carolos Khatchikian and Vice President Eva Akopian presented Esquivel, a Nobel laureate, with a bronze Armenian alphabet after his human rights lecture on August 22, 2007.



Adolfo Perez Esquivel poses with members of the very active AGBU "Liga de Jovenes"

Nobel Peace Prize winner Adolfo Perez Esquivel lectured on the importance of human rights to a crowd of over 200

young professionals and students on August 22, 2007 at a program organized by the AGBU "Liga de Jovenes" Youth Group of Buenos Aires.

Esquivel is a strong supporter of Armenian Genocide recognition and an advocate for human rights education. He spoke about the importance of memory and how knowledge of the past should be the foundation for a solid future regarding human rights issues.

"The people who have forgotten their past are the people who disappear," he reiterated. "Cultures are shared. A culture that buries itself is dead."

This is certainly not the case for Armenians, who have indeed survived. Esquivel further discussed the importance of educating others about our past.

This discussion was part of an ongoing two-year conference series put on by this active AGBU Youth Group. At the event's conclusion, youth group President Carolos Khatchikian and Vice President Eva Akopian presented Esquivel with a bronze Armenian alphabet piece made by artist Manual Gheridian to show their appreciation for the visit of such an honorable scholar and human rights activist.

Esquivel has born in Buenos Aires in 1931 and is currently the leader of the Service for Peace and Justice, an organization which brings together three regions of Latin America to seek non-violent actions to promote human rights issues. In the past, Esquivel has also worked as an architect and sculptor. He won the Nobel Peace Prize for his humanitarian work in 1980.



Videos

[01] Diálogos desde a periferia: Adolfo Pérez Esquivel

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_HIGu7L5I_c [55:50]

[02] I Mini Print Internacional Galicia «Adolfo Pérez Esquivel, Premio Nobel da Paz»

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7gkx31wdK8g> [37:45]

[03] Adolfo Pérez Esquivel: The Struggle for Human Rights in Latin America Today

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7WD4ggSRiQo> [1:01:45]

Adolfo Pérez Esquivel, artist, educator, author and promoter of non-violence, was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 1980 for his defence of human rights in his native Argentina and throughout Latin America. In his talk he will reflect on the evolution and progress in the field of human rights since the military dictatorships in much of the region ended thirty years ago, analysing how these developed under subsequent democratisation. He will also pose some of the urgent challenges being faced today as many of these gains are being rolled back in Brazil, Venezuela, Honduras, Paraguay, Colombia and Argentina and elsewhere.

[04] Roda Viva | Adolfo Pérez Esquivel | 2002

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pVyCRtgPpiQ> [1:24:51]

[05] "Alimentación y Ambientes Saludables como Derechos Humanos" Adolfo Pérez Esquivel

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=v8nYPVh7OSg> [2:39:03]

United Nations • Climate change refers to long-term shifts in temperatures and weather patterns. Human activities have been the main driver of climate change, primarily due to the burning of fossil fuels like coal, oil and gas.

Pictures / Images / Photos

<https://www.gettyimages.in/search/2/image?phrase=adolfo+p%C3%A9rez+esquivel>

155 Adolfo Pérez Esquivel Photos and High-res Pictures

Browse 155 adolfo pérez esquivel photos and images available, or start a new search to explore more photos and images.



Unmasking a Legend

The Story of Adolfo Perez Esquivel

<https://observervoice.com/unmasking-a-legend-the-story-of-adolfo-perez-esquivel-41393/>



Adolfo Perez Esquivel is an Argentine activist, community organizer, painter, writer, and sculptor. He was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize, which he received in 1980.

Life and Career

Adolfo Perez Esquivel was born on [November 26, 1931](#), in Buenos Aires, Argentina. His early life was marked by a strong commitment to justice and human rights. He grew up in a context of political and social turbulence in Argentina. Esquivel studied architecture at the University of Buenos Aires. He also pursued theological studies at the Latin American Episcopal Institute (ILADES). His education and background played a crucial role in shaping his perspective on social justice and human rights.

Esquivel became actively involved in human rights issues during the 1960s and 1970s, a period marked by political repression and authoritarian rule in Argentina. He worked with various organizations and movements advocating for justice and the protection of human rights. In 1974, Pérez Esquivel founded the Servicio Paz y Justicia (SERPAJ), an organization dedicated to promoting nonviolence and advocating for human rights. SERPAJ played a

crucial role in documenting human rights abuses during the military dictatorship in Argentina.

As a result of his activism, Pérez Esquivel was arrested and imprisoned without trial by the military junta in 1977. He spent 14 months in various detention centers, enduring torture and abuse. His release came after an international campaign for his freedom. In 1980, Adolfo Pérez Esquivel was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize for his efforts to promote human rights and nonviolence in Latin America. The Nobel Committee recognized his dedication to the defense of human dignity and his courageous struggle for justice.

After receiving the Nobel Peace Prize, Pérez Esquivel continued his activism on various fronts, both in Argentina and internationally. He remained committed to issues such as disarmament, social justice, and the rights of indigenous peoples.

Award and Legacy

Adolfo Pérez Esquivel's significant contributions to human rights and peace have earned him several awards and honors. The most notable among them is the [Nobel Peace Prize](#), which he received in 1980. This prestigious award recognized his unwavering commitment to nonviolence, justice, and human dignity, particularly in the context of the human rights abuses during the military dictatorship in Argentina.

Apart from the Nobel Peace Prize, Pérez Esquivel has been honored with numerous other awards and recognitions from various organizations and institutions globally. These awards acknowledge his tireless efforts in promoting human rights, social justice, and peace. Pérez Esquivel is widely regarded as a symbol of resilience and courage in the face of oppression. His steadfast dedication to the defense of human rights, even at great personal risk, has inspired generations of activists around the world.

The organization Pérez Esquivel founded, Servicio Paz y Justicia (SERPAJ), continues to be a prominent force in the promotion of human rights and nonviolence. The work of SERPAJ has had a lasting impact on the human rights landscape in Latin America. As a Nobel laureate, Pérez Esquivel has

been a powerful voice on the international stage, advocating for disarmament, justice, and the rights of marginalized communities. His influence extends beyond Argentina, shaping global conversations on human rights and peace.

In addition to his activism, Pérez Esquivel is also an accomplished artist. His artistic expressions, including paintings and sculptures, often carry themes related to justice, peace, and human rights. This dual role as an artist-activist adds a unique dimension to his legacy. Adolfo Pérez Esquivel's life and work serve as an inspiration for individuals and movements committed to social justice and human rights. His legacy encourages people to stand up against injustice, even in the most challenging circumstances.



United Nations

<https://violenceagainstchildren.un.org/news/srsg-meets-nobel-peace-prize-laureate-adolfo-p%C3%A9rez-esquivel-discuss-situation-children-deprived>

UN Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Violence Against Children

SRSG meets Nobel Peace Prize Laureate Adolfo Pérez Esquivel to discuss situation of children deprived of liberty and their reintegration in the community

Buenos Aires, 5 November 2015 - During a three-day visit to Argentina, SRSG Santos Pais met with Adolfo Pérez Esquivel, 1980 Nobel Peace Prize Laureate and President of the Association Peace and Justice Service.

At the meeting, SRSG Santos Pais and Mr. Pérez Esquivel discussed the promotion of Human Rights and protection of children from violence, namely of children and young people involved with the criminal justice system in the Latin America Region.



It is estimated that at least 1 million children are deprived of their liberty worldwide, a figure that is probably underrated. Research shows that the majority of detained children is awaiting trial, that a large proportion of these children are held for minor offences and are first-time offenders. Violence at home, poverty, structural violence and risky survival activities propel children into the juvenile justice system, and detention in the criminal justice system is often used as a substitute for referral to child care and protection institutions.

Founded in 1974, SERPAJ is a non-profit organization promoting Peace, Nonviolence and Human Rights with the peoples of Latin America. Mr. Pérez Esquivel presented its program aiming at supporting marginalized children involved with the juvenile justice system and at promoting their reintegration in the community. He expressed concern by the findings of last year's SERPAJ report on the situation of children deprived of liberty in the region.

"I am concerned about the worrying trend to place children in institutions for "their own protection". States should rather invest in minimizing the risk of violence against children by ensuring effective prevention. Incidents of violence occur while in custody of police and security forces, in both pre-trial and post-sentence detention, as well as a form of sentencing. Violence can be perpetrated by staff, adult detainees and other children, or be the result of self-harm." added SRSG Santos Pais. The Nobel peace Prize Laureate will join the celebration of the 10th Anniversary of the UN Study on violence against children: "Children can't stop smiling at life!" -he said.





<https://orato.world/2021/09/14/nobel-peace-prize-winner-survived-torture-by-argentinian-police/>



Adolfo Perez Esquivel receiving the Nobel Peace Prize in 1980.

BUENOS AIRES, Argentina - On April 4, 1977, I renewed my passport at the Central Department of the Argentine Federal Police.

I was working with the **Peace and Justice Service**, a Latin American movement that advocates for peace and human rights through active nonviolence. We were fighting the oppression of the Latin American people by military dictatorships.

At the Department of Police, without a judicial process, I was arrested. I never imagined this would become the worst moment of my life. I was detained and tortured for 14 months.

Anguish consumed him

Torture is an archaic practice. It destroys you physically and attacks you emotionally and psychologically. The profound desolation and humiliation are worse than the physical pain.

[As a political prisoner], my captors often sought to humiliate me; to break me mentally and physically. In the worst moments, I felt infinite anguish. I was paralyzed, drowning in confusion. Guilt often followed for getting to that point.

I took refuge in a single photo I had of my family. My heart broke as I longed for them. I wondered all the time how they were doing.

While I was in "the tube," a very small, dirty, smelly cell, an officer told me, "God will not save you."

Prisoners murdered on the "flight of death"

When I mention the "flight of death," my skin prickles, and my eyes fill with tears. On these trips, the military threw people out of airplanes. Despite all the torture I endured, I never thought I would witness such a heinous, dehumanizing, and heartless situation.

During the ascent, they did not say where I was going. I realized the aircraft was flying in circles because I recognized the cities of La Plata, Montevideo, and Colonia.

Without hesitation, I dared ask what would happen to me. They gave no answer. I tried to keep myself psychologically whole, but death stood close. Despite my anxiety and sense of helplessness, I worked hard to maintain my sanity and connect with my ideals.

After two hours of circling, the plane landed at the El Palomar Airbase. The weather was getting colder and [the atmosphere] more tense.

I breathed a sigh of relief [to have survived the flight], yet I was exhausted and disgusted, being witness to so many crimes.

Captive escapes Argentinian government awarded the Nobel Peace Prize

Two days before the 1978 World Cup, hosted by Argentina, my captors unknowingly set me free.

[That day], I left unit nine, and the agent escorting me stopped to load gasoline. He took off my handcuffs, left a gun on the seat, and got out of the vehicle. My mind was filled with questions.

Although I wanted to take the gun and flee, I knew many prisoners got killed in alleged escape attempts. I decided to expose my hands and, when the officer returned, I told him I hadn't noticed the weapon.

We continued on our way and I felt uncertain. Several miles later, in the middle of a field, a green Ford Falcon stopped. The officer told me to get out. Almost without breathing, I fled - my gaze lost and semi-paralyzed.

I cannot remember what happened in the following hours. My next memory is coming home and hugging my wife. I was detained for 14 months and kept on surveillance for another 14 months after that.

I found out international organizations had pressured the government to release me. The government didn't want to comply. While imprisoned, the guards would tell me, "You

will leave here with your feet forward," [an Argentinian expression meaning you will leave dead or in a coffin].

Several years after my captivity, I was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize. After having survived so many transgressions, my reward arrived. I received it with great pride and joy.

I trust my people to remember what happened, who did it, and what their motives were. Knowing history directs us toward progress. It ensures we do not allow these events to happen again.




**Nobel Peace Prize winner
Adolfo Pérez Esquivel
puts his artistic life on display**

<https://www.batimes.com.ar/news/culture/nobel-peace-prize-winner-adolfo-perez-esquivel-puts-his-artistic-life-on-display.phtml>

Legendary human rights activist takes his art public in a new exhibition at the Lucy Mattos Museum in Béccar, San Isidro.



ARGENTINE NOBEL PEACE PRIZE, HUMAN RIGHTS ACTIVIST AND ARTIST ADOLFO PÉREZ ESQUIVEL SPEAKS DURING AN INTERVIEW WITH AFP ON JUNE 30, 2022, AT THE LUCY MATTOS MUSEUM IN BÉCCAR.

 il paintings, ink sketches, sculptures in wood and bronze - Adolfo Pérez Esquivel, recipient of the Nobel Peace Prize in 1980, is making public his other life in art.

Last weekend, the human rights campaigner opened a new exhibition collating his work from the 1950s to the modern day.

Pérez Esquivel, an intense militant in defence of human rights who was tortured as a prisoner during the 1976-1983 military dictatorship, is less well known as an architect and artist, the subject of his studies at La Plata University and the Escuela Nacional de Bellas Artes.

But with the exception of a series of drawings of the La Boca neighbourhood from the 1950s and portraits of his wife Amanda and son Ernesto, his new exhibition at the Lucy Mattos Museum in the Greater Buenos suburb of Béccar (San Isidro) displays work reflecting a strongly political component.

Stories that caught our eye: March 14 to 21

"For me there is no difference between art and life, it's the same thing. It's the form of saying something which you carry inside and want to transmit," said Pérez Esquivel in an interview with the AFP news agency.

Drawings of the bombardment of an Iraq refugee in 2001 and a trip to Hiroshima are exhibited along with the acrylic sketch entitled *La virgen de los cartoneros* (as those who recycle rubbish are called in Argentina).

"That work will end up going to the *cartoneros*. They know it and are waiting for it," he pointed out, adding: "Nobody taught me poverty since I was one of the poor."

'Art remains'

Born in 1931 in Buenos Aires City, Pérez Esquivel lost his mother at a very young age and was left to the care of nuns in a boarding school and his maternal grandmother, of indigenous and Guaraní origin.

"Iraq and Hiroshima were scenarios in which I participated. They didn't tell me, I was there. Art generates memory. We pass on and art remains," he asserts, discussing the warlike images.

The exhibition also includes a painting of the refugees whom he got to know on the island of Lesbos (Greece) and episodes of contemporary Argentine history.

Laura Casanovas, the curator of the exhibition, explained that in the case of Pérez Esquivel, "art was never excised from struggle."

"The ink drawings, the woodcuts, the acrylic paintings, the watercolours and the sculptures all uncover different stylistic stages with artistic proposals as much close to realism as to vanguard, above all with Latin American roots, but with their own formal solutions," she adds.

Although Pérez Esquivel has a mural in the cathedral of Riobamba (Ecuador) another in Curitiba (Brazil) and a sculpture in tribute to Gandhi in Barcelona (Spain), among other permanently installed works, this exhibition is his first in over 40 years.

"I've had many occupations and time goes by," he justifies not having organised an exhibition previously.

Spirituality

At the age of 90, and following a recent stroke, he still keeps on painting. At the moment he is recreating *The Last Supper* in a work still in progress and in which he will include the Virgin Mary and Mary Magdalene, along with the 12 disciples.

With his profound religious beliefs, Pérez Esquivel was very close to the Theology of Liberation and was a militant of Christian movements based on non-violence. His paintings highlight the main figures of that strand, such as the archbishops Helder Camara of Brazil and Arnulfo Romero of El Salvador.

"I passed through torture and the death flights but I never entered into existential anguish. It was my spirituality which saves me and saved me from seeing the horror and the death," says this slow-spoken man who barely needs a stick to walk.

Of the paintings on display, one of his favourites is *La muerte enamorada de la vida* ("Death in love with life"), in which a skull offers a flower to a seated woman.

"Life and death are the same things. There is not one without the other," he affirms.



Nobel winner Adolfo Pérez Esquivel released from hospital after stroke

<https://www.batimes.com.ar/news/argentina/nobel-winner-adolfo-perez-esquivel-released-from-hospital-after-stroke.phtml>

Argentine human rights activist and Nobel Peace Prize winner Adolfo Pérez Esquivel was released from hospital following a minor stroke, his family said late on Tuesday.



In this file photo taken on March 16, 2016, Nobel Peace Prize winner Adolfo Pérez Esquivel talks to journalists during a press conference in Buenos Aires, a week before the visit of US President Barack Obama to Argentina.

Human rights activist and Nobel Peace Prize winner Adolfo Pérez Esquivel was released from hospital following a minor stroke, his family said late on Tuesday.

The 90-year-old Argentine was taken to a hospital in the seaside resort of Mar del Plata on Saturday following a health scare.

Doctors performed tests including an MRI scan but had said he was stable.

"Adolfo has already been discharged and is heading to Buenos Aires to continue his recovery," his family said on social media.

US bans Fernández de Kirchner, De Vido from entry over 'involvement in significant corruption'

An official medical report said he had an ischemic stroke, which is caused by a temporary blockage of blood circulation to the brain.

Born in the Buenos Aires neighbourhood of San Telmo, Pérez Esquivel had since his youth campaigned against violence and in favour of the most marginalised in society.

He spent 14 months in prison and another 14 months under probation. It was during this time that he was awarded the Nobel Prize, a fact that caused bewilderment and irritation among the regime's generals,

who were condemned years later for their systematic plan to eliminate and disappear opponents.

United States bars Cristina Fernández de Kirchner from entry due to graft case

"Institutionalised violence, misery and oppression enshrine a social order that benefits a few: the rich getting richer at the expense of the poor getting poorer," he said on receiving the Nobel in 1980.

Pérez Esquivel is the son of a Spanish immigrant father from Galicia and a mother of indigenous origin from the province of Corrientes. He is a self-professed admirer of Mahatma Ghandi and Martin Luther King.

In addition to his imprisonment, there was also an assassination attempt against his life during the dictatorship era.

Qualification all but clinched as Lionel's depleted Scaloneta gets revenge in Montevideo

"Two days after the Nobel Prize was announced, we were on our way with my son Leonardo to SERPAJ, and some people came forward with guns in their hands to kill us. My son accelerated the car and luckily there was a taxi that intervened and saved our lives," he said.

In a recent interview he condemned the worldwide growth of the far-right: "It is worrying. They are totalitarian movements or philo-Nazi groups. It has to do first of all with a lack of memory."

Pérez Esquivel is one of five Argentines
to have received a Nobel Prize.

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